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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 31 | Min 23 | Humidity 69% Partly Cloudy Sensex 81,330 | Nifty 24,666 | Gold 92,310 | Silver 95,357 | Dollar 85.40 | Euro 95.91 | GBP 113.84

ALL PRESENT

As over 12,000 pourakarmikas brought on the rolls in BBMP, they will have to start using facial recognition based attendance system too

PAGE 4

ON ALERT

ISRO tightens security at its Byalalu Deep Space Network Centre near Tavarekere that plays a crucial role in India's space communication infra

PAGE 6

Matrimonial fraud cases have been dipping steadily over the past four years, but 2025 has not begun on a good note. With 30 cases reported by end of April, officials ask families to stay alert

NOT THE KNOT THEY WANTED TO TIE

From 2022 to 2025 there has been a 78% drop in the number of cases

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

In early March, a 29-year-old woman from Bengaluru was contacted on a matrimonial site by a man claiming to be a Canadian citizen of Karnataka origin and a senior executive at a reputed firm. Their chats moved to WhatsApp and things seemed to be moving on in the right direction. However, after an ordeal that lasted for a couple of months, the woman ended up losing Rs 5.6 lakh.

PAGE 3: SAFE CITY

Matrimonial fraud cases have been a bane in the city, but the tide appears to be turning finally. Police data shows that such cases have been on a steady decline over the past four years. The number of reported cases has seen a drop, from a peak of 135 cases in 2022 to just 30 so far in 2025. There has been approximately a 77.78% drop in reported cases from 2022 to 2025.

In 2024, the number of reported cases remained relatively stable at 60 for the entire year, averaging around five cases per month. However, in 2025, there has been a noticeable

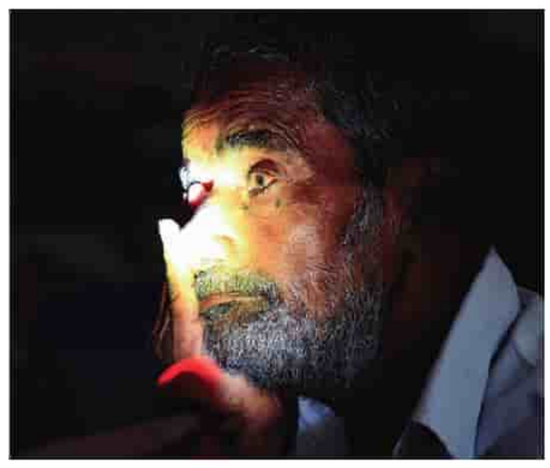
CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

"Earlier, matrimonial alliances were listed in newspapers, now they're on online platforms, which are helpful but can be misused. Many people skip background checks after liking a profile, which is a major mistake

— Dr A Nagarathna, Cyber Law, NLSIU

Out of sight

Study by NGO in 218 slums of city reveals healthcare, especially eye care services, remain inaccessible to majority



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A study of 218 slums in Bengaluru, conducted by a city-based NGO, has highlighted that healthcare services, especially eye care, remain largely inaccessible in the majority of these slums.

Conducted by Sightsavers India, the study underlines that while healthcare facilities were available in the slums, access remained a significant concern due to affordability issues. For eye health, slum residents primarily depend on private facilities, as access to government health facilities for eye care was relatively limited. Lack of awareness and insufficient attention were cited as reasons for slum residents tending to neglect eye health or overlook minor eye-related issues.

The study also reveals stark inequalities in slum conditions with inadequate housing, poor sanitation, and limited access to clean water.

The survey focused on slum areas within the city, selected based on their high population density and inclusion of vulnerable segments of the population. Out of 542 slums, 218 slums with a population of 1,000 and above were included. Stakeholders with in-depth knowledge of the slum areas, such as community leaders, housing or urban development personnel, public health representatives, social workers, local government officials, business representatives,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Soulful music

Artkhoj is organising an enchanting evening of classical music with the soulful sounds of sitar and tabla. **Where: Artkhoj, JP Nagar; When: May 17, 6.30 pm**

02 Theatrical marvel

Academy of Music and Nrithya Rangoli Festival is presenting Rama Katha Vismaya, a broadway style grand spectacle that brings together 60 talented artists and cutting-edge techniques to create an immersive experience unlike any other. **Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Malleshwaram; When: May 17 and 18, 6.30 pm**

03 Unwavering connections

Ranga Shankara is presenting 'Love Letters- Ninna Preetiya, Naanu!', a play about friendship, missed chances, and the kind of connection that refuses to fade. It's a reminder that sometimes the words we write live longer than the moments we live. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar; When: May 29 and 30, 7.30 pm**

04 Puppet art

The Museum of Art and Photography is organising 'The Scrappy Puppet Tales' workshop, where kids will become puppet creators using all sorts of cool scrap and junk. It's a hands-on adventure where imagination takes centre stage. **Where: Museum of Art and Photography, Ashok Nagar; When: May 19 to May 24**

05 Musical realm

Phoenix Marketcity is set to host Salim-Sulaiman, the dynamic duo who have contributed masterpieces to the Indian music landscape, live in concert. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; When: May 24, 7 pm**

'Privacy not a shield against investigation'

Customer data confidentiality must be balanced with accountability requirements; data protection obligations must yield to public interest, says HC

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The Court determined that existing laws permit information sharing with statutory authorities, including investigators

The Karnataka High Court dismissed a petition by PhonePe contesting a police notice requesting user information related to alleged illegal sports betting transactions on their platform.

PhonePe's challenge was based on its status as an intermediary and its obligation to safeguard client confidentiality.

Justice M Nagaprasanna ruled that customer privacy protection cannot impede legitimate investigations, particularly given the sophistication of contemporary cybercrime.

"Such offences demand swift, targeted, and effective response. The police must be empowered within the limits of law to unearth digital footprints that could otherwise vanish. Therefore, while privacy as contended by the petitioner should be maintained, it cannot be wielded as a shield against lawful investigation," stated the judge in his April 29 ruling. The Court emphasised that customer data confidentiality must be balanced with accountability requirements.

"The protection of consumer privacy cannot eclipse the lawful imperative of investigating officers to secure evidence and take the investigation to its logical conclusion. Confidentiality must coexist with accountability," the Court said.

The case originated from a 2022 complaint where an individual reported using PhonePe to deposit approximately Rs 6,000 to a sports betting website during India versus South Africa cricket matches. The complainant was subsequently unable to withdraw funds and lost access to the website.

The police issued a notice to PhonePe in December 2022 under Section 91 of the CrPC, seeking details about user transactions, customer due diligence practices, and potential gambling-related activities on their platform.

PhonePe contested the notice, citing obligations under the Payment and Settlement System Act, 2007, and the Bankers Books Evidence Act, 1891, arguing that court orders were necessary for data disclosure.

The Court determined that existing laws permit information sharing with statutory authorities, including investigators. The Information Technology Rules, 2011, require intermediaries to respond to legitimate investigation requests within 72 hours.

The Court ruled that PhonePe cannot claim immunity from investigation when criminal activity is suspected, stating that data protection obligations must yield to public interest and criminal investigations. The Court found the police notice legitimate, particularly as it aimed to trace potential illicit financial transactions, and subsequently dismissed PhonePe's petition

IN HIGH COURT

HC grants wife operational authority over comatose husband's bank account

The Karnataka High Court has designated Dr Anil Kumar HV's wife as his legal guardian, allowing her to manage his bank accounts on his behalf, as he has been in a comatose state for the past nine months due to a neurological condition. Justice M Nagaprasanna, in his ruling, stated "In the light of the condition of the husband of the petitioner, I deem it appropriate to permit the petitioner, the wife of Dr Anil Kumar HV, to operate the account."

He directed banks to allow the petitioner to draw money for day-to-day treatment of her husband and for the livelihood of their family. "Respondents 2 to 4 (State Bank of India/Indian Overseas Bank) shall not brook any delay and shall permit normal operation of the account at the hands of the petitioner," the Court stated.

Dr Kumar has been under intensive care and ventilator support since June 23, 2024. On November 29, 2024, specialists at the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute's Neurology Department diagnosed him with Guillain-Barré Syndrome, necessitating continued mechanical ventilation.

The banks' inaction prevented access to funds needed for treatment expenses and family maintenance, leading the wife to seek legal intervention. "The livelihood of the family is now put in jeopardy, as the averment in the petition is for nine months, the family is unable to meet both the ends, as no money can be drawn from the accounts, one of which also holds the pension of the husband of the petitioner," it said. Owing to peculiar facts, the Court deemed it appropriate to permit the petitioner to operate the account. **— BMB**

UAS Bengaluru to host 59th convocation ceremony

The 59th convocation of the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru, will be held on Thursday at the Gandhi Krishi Vigyana Kendra (GKVK) campus. A total of 1,271 students from the 2023–24 academic year will be conferred undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral degrees. Retired IAS officer V Balasubramanian, known for his contributions to sericulture, administrative reforms, and rural development, and Yogendra Kumar, Marketing Director of Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO), known for innovations in nano fertilisers and service to the farming community, will be awarded honorary doctorates.

Vice-Chancellor Dr SV Suresh announced that the convocation, coinciding with the University's diamond jubilee celebrations, will take place at 11 am at the Dr Babu Rajendra Prasad International Auditorium, GKVK. Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot will preside over the ceremony, while State Agriculture Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy will be the guest of honour. Dr US Awasthi, Managing Director of IFFCO, will deliver the convocation address.

Vice-Chancellor Dr SV Suresh announced that the convocation will take place at 11 am at the Dr Babu Rajendra Prasad International Auditorium, GKVK

Of the graduating students, 871 are receiving undergraduate degrees, 380 are postgraduates (including 20 doctoral and 2 postgraduate diploma holders), with 150 gold medals being awarded across categories. BSc (Hons) Agriculture student Deepti TL received 13 gold medals and 4 donor-sponsored certificates. Among the top achievers is R Spoorthi from Mysuru, daughter of a mechanic shop owner, who bagged 9 gold medals. She is pursuing an MSc in Plant Breeding and Genetics at Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) Ranchi, with a vision to develop a high-yielding paddy variety following the success of 'Jaya'. Another standout performer was Deepthi from Talakalakoppa in Shivamogga, who hails from a village with just 30 households, won 13 gold medals in BSc Agriculture. She is pursuing an MSc in Plant Breeding and Genetics at the IARI, New Delhi, aiming to become an agricultural scientist. Yakshith, son of a security guard at Reserve Bank of India, secured three gold medals in BSc Agriculture. **— BMB**

Liquor prices to rise as excise hiked again

After increasing Additional Excise Duty (AED) on Indian Made Liquor (IML) and beer earlier this year, the Karnataka government has once again revised the rates upward. A final notification was issued on Tuesday, with the revised prices set to come into effect from May 15. Under the revised structure, AED on the first three slabs of IML (180 ml each) has been increased by Rs 15, while the fourth slab sees a hike of Rs 5. For beer, AED has been raised from 195% to 200% of the production cost, marking a 5% increase.

Currently, AED on beer in Karnataka is levied at 195% of the production cost. This increase was previously proposed in a draft notification and has now been formalised. As a result of this hike, the price of premium and other beer brands is expected to go up by Rs 10 to Rs 15 per bottle, depending on production costs. Premium brands may see at least a Rs 10 hike per bottle, while mid-range and cheaper local beer brands could rise by up to Rs 5. However, prices will vary across brands. According to Excise Department sources, brands with higher alcohol content are likely to see a more significant price rise.

The government has cited the need to align IML rates with those in neighboring states as one of the reasons for the hike. The revision applies to IML brands that fall under the first four slabs, covering most whisky, gin, and rum products. However, sources clarified that premium/high-end liquor brands have been spared from this round of price hike. **— BMB**

Crime plummets in B'luru, survey ranks city safest

Bengaluru, now Greater Bengaluru, ranks safest city in India in University of Hyderabad survey; major crimes like dacoity, robbery, and cyber fraud fell sharply in early 2025, aided by better patrolling, surveillance, and awareness

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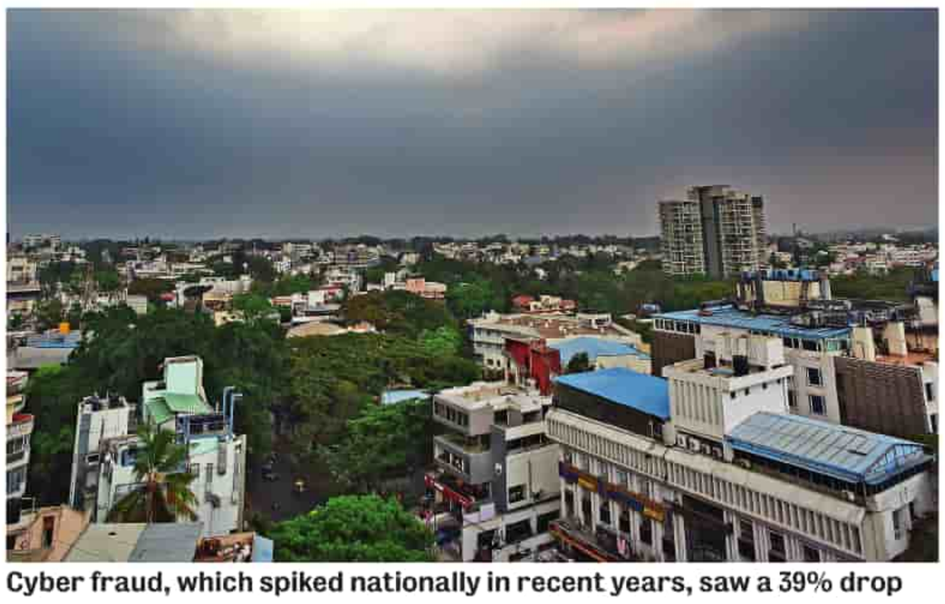
Bengaluru is now officially recognised as Greater Bengaluru with the implementation of the Greater Bangalore Administration Act from May 15. A University of Hyderabad survey also reports a sharp drop in crime in the first quarter of 2025. The findings show a significant improvement in public safety and crime control, and the impact of increased policing, surveillance technology, and awareness campaigns.

Bengaluru is one of the safest cities to live and work in the country, with 337.3 cases of cognizable offences reported per lakh residents. The city is known for its cosmopolitan culture, pleasant climate, and thriving tech industry. Safety and security are a top priority, with regular police patrols ensuring a secure environment.



Cyber fraud, which spiked nationally in recent years, saw a 39% drop

During the weekly press meet, City Police Commissioner B Dayananda stated, "The University of Hyderabad conducted a survey using various parameters and including other cities. According to their research, Bengaluru has been ranked as the safest city, securing the top position, while Kolkata is considered the least safe among the 10 cities surveyed."

According to police officials, in the first three months of this year compared to the last two years, there have been several major crimes that saw a drastic reduction compared to previous years. Dacoity cases decreased by 71%, while robbery incidents decreased by an impressive 73%. Chain snatching, a persistent issue in many city neighbourhoods, dropped by 57%, suggesting enhanced patrolling and better response mechanisms.

> **According to their research, Bengaluru has been ranked as safest city, while Kolkata is considered the least safe among the10 cities surveyed**
>
> –B Dayananda, commissioner

Night-time thefts, which often contribute to a feeling of insecurity among city dwellers, also showed a notable decrease by 41%. According to police officials, this can be attributed to increased deployment of night beat patrols and the use of CCTV surveillance in residential and commercial areas.

In 2024, a total of 63,284 FIR cases were registered, compared to 74,046 cases in 2023. Of these, the cases reported under IPC/BNS and SLL were 57,554 in 2024 and 68,520 in 2023.

More importantly, in 2025, Indian Penal Code (IPC) cases registered across the city dropped by 12%; meanwhile, comparing 2023 and 2024, there was a 20% decrease in IPC cases, a figure that represents a broader decline in both violent and non-violent crimes. Cyber fraud, which has seen a sharp rise nationally in recent years, also recorded a 39% reduction, suggesting that awareness programs and digital vigilance efforts by the Cyber Crime Police Station are bearing fruit.

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Jobs permanent, now all set for biometric attendance

As 12,692 civic workers will now be on BBMP's rolls, they will have to start logging attendance using the facial-recognition based system

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has launched a 'permanent benefit' scheme for civic workers who were previously employed on a contractual basis. Alongside this, BBMP has introduced a facial recognition-based biometric attendance system to streamline attendance tracking and enhance transparency.

According to BBMP officials, 12,692 civic workers, who have served the Palike for decades, are now receiving permanent employment orders. These workers will earn a fixed monthly salary of ₹39,000. This initiative also aims to eliminate malpractices such as the creation of fake worker records used to siphon off unauthorised wages. To address this, BBMP is leveraging new software systems for tighter control and monitoring. To support the biometric attendance rollout, BBMP has procured 600 facial recognition machines at a cost of ₹2.93 crore. The contractor responsible for delivering the machines is also tasked with their operation and maintenance for two years.

BBMP civic workers to mark their attendance thrice daily—at 6.30 am, 10.00 am, and 1.30 pm

> **"This initiative also aims to eliminate malpractices such as the creation of fake worker records used to siphon off unauthorised wages**
> – BBMP Official

Shift from contractual to direct salary payment system

Since 2018, around 17,500 civic workers in Bengaluru have been included under the direct salary payment system. Prior to this reform, contractors inflated workforce numbers to as many as 32,000 workers—leading to massive discrepancies and underpayment to actual workers. In response, the government introduced the direct salary payment model, disbursing wages directly to workers' bank accounts to ensure transparency and accountability.

Following this, BBMP adopted biometric attendance systems, which led to a significant reduction in recorded workers—from 32,000 to 17,500. However, the earlier biometric devices, purchased in 2018, are now outdated or beyond repair, prompting the need for upgraded infrastructure.

Attendance three times a day

To reinforce accountability, each BBMP ward now includes 3–4 muster centres for civic workers to mark their attendance thrice daily—at 6.30 am, 10.00 am, and 1.30 pm. These are monitored by junior health inspectors or ward supervisors using the new biometric machines. Payments will be based strictly on attendance logs to prevent absenteeism and ensure that salaries reflect work completed.

Annual wage bill rises to ₹594 crore

A BBMP official explained that under the direct salary system, the civic body previously spent ₹411.38 crore annually for 12,692 workers. With the monthly wage increase from ₹27,000 to ₹39,000, the annual wage bill will now rise to ₹594 crore. The official added, "This system aims to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability in managing civic workers—benefiting not only the workers themselves but also the overall city administration."

Some marriages are not made in heaven

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

shift. As of April 30, a total of 30 cases have already been reported within just the first four months, resulting in an average of 7.5 cases per month. This comparison indicates an upward trend, suggesting that the number of cases is increasing in 2025 when compared to the previous year.

Police officials attribute the downward trend to improved digital literacy, better background checks by families, but they also urged individuals and families to remain vigilant, cross-verify information, and report suspicious activity without delay. "Love may be blind, but vigilance should not be," an officer urged.

Experts spoke of the rising digital literacy

"With rising digital literacy, we're also seeing a surge in digital platform frauds. These scams often prey on emotions and eventually lead to financial loss. It usually begins with a fake profile that collects personal information. In matrimonial frauds, if both financial and online elements are involved, it's best to call 1930. Otherwise, victims should report it at the local police station. Earlier, matrimonial alliances were listed in newspapers, now they're on online platforms, which are helpful but can be misused. Many people skip background checks after liking a profile, which is a major mistake. Even the platforms themselves must ensure proper verification. Ultimately, it's our own vulnerability that gets exploited," said Dr A Nagarathna, Cyber Law, NLSIU.

Case studies

The matrimonial con exploits people's vulnerability after getting close to somebody who is thinking of a future with the person. Usually the modus operandi is the same as the one used by the so-called Canadian groom. After speaking to the woman for a month, he claimed he was flying to India to meet her and sent her a photo of his flight ticket, saying he was bringing expensive gifts and a large amount of cash. On April 17, he said he had landed in Delhi but was detained for carrying undeclared valuables. Soon, a woman posing as a customs officer called her and demanded the payment of duties and penalties. Trusting them, the woman transferred ₹5.6 lakh in multiple installments. When the duo became unreachable, she filed a police complaint.

In another case, one Jeevan Kumar, a bodybuilder, allegedly posed as an IAS officer to cheat multiple women. He reportedly created a fake profile on a matrimonial website, introducing himself as a high-ranking government official looking for marriage. After gaining the trust of women, he promised to marry them and began demanding money, claiming his mother had cancer and

needed treatment.

The accused took ₹3 lakh in phases and later demanded an additional ₹5 lakh. When the victim hesitated, he threatened to leak her private photos and videos on social media and even warned her against filing a complaint. Jeevan allegedly used emotional manipulation and blackmail to extort money. The case has been registered at the Hebbal police station. Police said over 20 women across the country may have been targeted in a similar manner. Back in 2023 the same individual was arrested by Mangaluru police officials on the charges of cheating a young woman after having physical relationship with her by promising to marry her.

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Tree trouble

BM Kaval

A tree has been lying on a house in BM Kaval, HAL 3rd Stage, for nearly 24 hours. Despite multiple calls to the helpline, residents have only been redirected from one official to another, with no response or resolution so far.

Road neglect

Margondanahalli

The roads in Margondanahalli, stretching from a local college to a nearby temple, have remained undeveloped for 11 years, causing daily inconvenience to residents.

Broken stretch

Lal Masjid Road

The road near a masjid on Oph Road, Lal Masjid, is in a severely damaged state, creating challenges for daily commuters.

BBMP eyes private land for waste management facility

Civic agency plans to buy 38 acres of private land in Doddaballapura to build major waste-processing plant; this facility is expected to handle 25% of Bengaluru's waste

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For the first time, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will buy private land to set up a waste-processing plant, a major shift in approach as the civic body struggles to find enough government land to manage the city's growing garbage problem.

The state government has conditionally approved BBMP's plan to purchase 38 acres and 18 guntas of land from Terra Firma Biotechnologies Limited. The land is located in Kundalahalli, Doddaballapura taluk, and is part of a 134-acre area planned for a large integrated waste-processing facility. Once ready, the plant is expected to handle about 25% of Bengaluru's waste.

So far, BBMP has only built waste plants on government land. But with public protests, legal challenges, and a lack of available land making things difficult, the civic body is now exploring private land options.

Land purchase is approved in principle, but compensation is pending

The 134-acre site includes 46 acres owned by the Revenue Department, 27 acres of 'kharab' land (non-cultivable government land), 38 acres owned by Terra Firma, and 22 acres leased by the company from local farmers.

Terra Firma had earlier signed a deal with BBMP in 2008 to process 1,000 tonnes of waste daily. However, the plant shut down in 2015, five years before the contract was to end, due to protests and other issues. Since then, the company has reportedly been in financial trouble.

The government has allowed BBMP to acquire the land under the 2013 Land Acquisition Act, but with strict conditions. Terra Firma must remove all old waste from its land and the nearby government land, return Rs 6.81 crore (plus interest) to BBMP, which was earlier given as a loan, and take responsibility for any damage caused by earlier dumping activities.

The company's requests for 60.99 crore in compensation for losses and to sell off its existing equipment have been rejected. To make matters more complex, the land deal is currently under litigation. BBMP has been told to inform the High Court before making any payment, which will come from its funds.

"The government has given in-principle approval for the land purchase, but the deal hasn't been finalised yet as the compensation amount is still to be decided," a senior BBMP official told BM. "We chose this land because it already houses a waste-processing facility and is adjacent to government land, making it ideal for integration. The owner was also willing to sell, which made it a viable option for us."

The Doddaballapur site is one of four new waste plant locations planned under a public-private partnership model promoted by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. BBMP is still searching for large land parcels in three other areas around Bengaluru.

Two-decade EPIC issue resolved

Election Commission of India (ECI) has successfully resolved a nearly two-decade-old legacy issue related to similar Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) numbers, which had inadvertently been issued to genuine electors due to the use of similar alphanumeric series by different Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) across constituencies since 2005. This discrepancy, which had persisted for years, did not affect any election outcomes but remained a technical anomaly in the electoral rolls.

An Election Commission official said, "To address this long-pending issue, the ECI undertook a nationwide drive involving the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all 36 States and Union Territories and the EROs of all 4,123 Assembly constituencies. The extensive verification process covered the entire electoral database of over 99 crore voters spread across 10.5 lakh polling stations. With approximately 1,000 electors per polling station, the number of similar EPIC numbers discovered was extremely low, averaging just one in every four polling stations. Field-level verification confirmed that these similar EPIC number holders were legitimate voters registered in different constituencies and polling stations. All affected voters have now been issued new EPIC cards with unique numbers to prevent further confusion."

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BESCOM unveils digital grievance hub

The Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) will soon launch a digital portal to improve transparency and efficiency in handling consumer grievances, announced Dr N Sivashankar, Managing Director of BESCOM.

Dr Sivashankar made the announcement during a workshop organised by BESCOM in collaboration with the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC). The session, held at the KEB Engineers Association Hall on Tuesday, was attended by office bearers and members of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF).

He said the upcoming digital platform will be crucial in strengthening consumer rights and enhancing accountability in the grievance redressal process. "A dedicated platform is being developed to streamline the management of consumer complaints, with the Chief General Manager of Corporate Affairs overseeing the process," he said.

Highlighting efforts for timely grievance resolution, Dr Sivashankar noted that CGRFs have been set up at the district level as directed by the KERC Chairman. These forums include a Superintendent Engineer, an Executive Engineer, and independent members. He added that complaints should be resolved within a specific timeframe, and if not addressed at the forum or corporate level, consumers can approach KERC for further redressal.

Providing legal context, HK Jagadish, Member of KERC's Legal Department and a retired District Sessions Judge, said Sections 42(5) and 42(6) of Electricity Act 2003, mandate such forums. **–BMB**

Govt set to run 108 ambulance

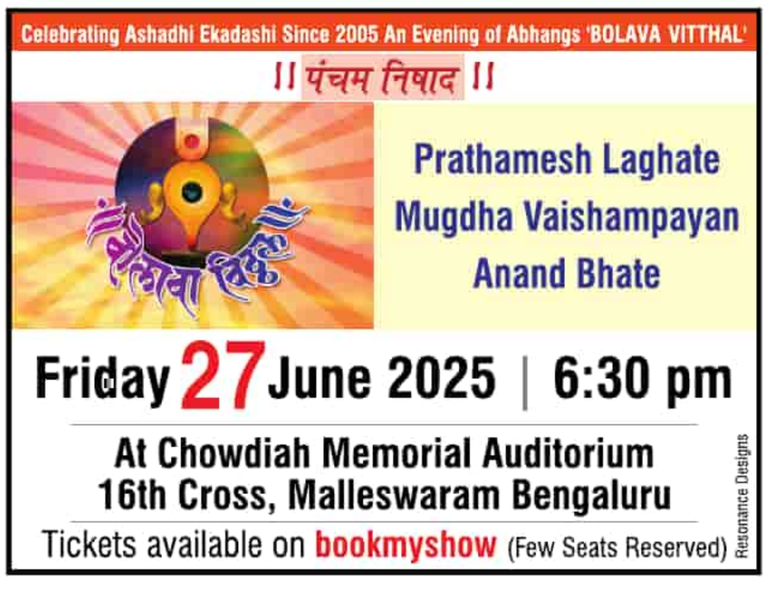
The state government will take over the management of the 108 Ambulance service from private agencies, announced Health Minister Dinesh Gundurao. Addressing the media in Bengaluru, the Minister said that while private agencies had been operating the service, the arrangement had led to several issues.

Health department aims to save money and improve the ambulance system's efficiency

Gundurao pointed out that despite the government making timely payments to the agencies, ambulance staff often faced delayed salaries. "There were repeated complaints from drivers, and the government had to step in multiple times," he said. "With direct control, we aim to resolve these challenges and ensure more efficient service delivery."

The minister noted that although private agencies managed operations, the government retained ownership of the service and covered key expenses including fuel and driver salaries. The service had been run through a single command centre, which the new model replaced with decentralised management.

A successful pilot of government-led operations was conducted in Chamarajanagar district, which the minister cited as proof of concept. Building on that success, the Health Department plans to bring services in three moths. **–BMB**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ISRO's Byalalu centre on high alert amid security push

Police personnel sensitising villagers near Byalalu to boost security vigilance

Police, CISF bolster surveillance as strategic deep-space hub faces renewed threat concerns

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

In the wake of rising tensions and increased security concerns following India's past strikes on terror camps in Pakistan—where ISRO's satellite surveillance played a pivotal role—the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has further tightened security at its Byalalu Deep Space Network Centre near Tavarekere.

Located in Ramanagara district and spread across 120 acres, the Indian Deep Space Network (IDSN) at Byalalu is a key asset in India's space communication architecture. The facility supports ISRO's deep space missions and satellite-based strategic surveillance, and is now under intensified security monitoring.

"The local police are actively sensitising villagers around Byalalu and conducting thorough security sweeps to ensure no threats go unnoticed –Srinivas Gowda, Ramanagar SP

Following directives from the Chief Minister, the district police have ramped up patrolling and are conducting door-to-door verification drives in nearby villages to enhance vigilance and reassure residents.

The security enhancement follows renewed geopolitical unease and the site's history of prior threats. In a notable 2010 incident, security forces opened fire on two unidentified individuals found loitering near the campus in the early morning hours. The shootout has since become a benchmark for risk assessment at the facility.

To forestall any emerging threats, personnel from the Ramanagara district police, supported by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), are now stationed in the vicinity. Police teams are also sensitising villagers and appealing to the local population to report any unfamiliar presence or suspicious movement without delay. Superintendent of Police Srinivas Gowda confirmed that these outreach efforts are aimed at building grassroots-level awareness and strengthening the intelligence network around the installation.

Commissioned in 2008, the Byalalu centre houses state-of-the-art 18-meter and 32-meter antennas, capable of receiving signals from deep space missions such as Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan. Weighing over 350 tonnes each, the antennas allow real-time communication with spacecraft millions of kilometres away. The site also hosts the Indian Space Science Data Centre, which archives invaluable scientific data used by both national and international researchers.

Functioning alongside ISRO's Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Peenya, Bengaluru, the Byalalu DSN plays an increasingly strategic role—not only in scientific exploration but also in national security operations through satellite imaging and data support.

As cross-border tensions persist, protecting assets like the Byalalu center has become an urgent priority for both state and central security agencies.

AI to keep eye on railway stations

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Railway stations under the South Western Railway (SWR) zone have now come under the watchful eye of Artificial Intelligence-powered surveillance cameras, aimed at curbing crime and ensuring commuter safety. The new system immediately alerts railway police if a person with a criminal background enters the station premises, allowing real-time monitoring of their movements. This initiative is directly linked with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's central database, significantly improving criminal tracking for the railway department.

In a first for Indian Railways, Mysuru railway station has been equipped with a state-of-the-art Converged Communication System (CCS), which integrates voice, video, and data on a single network. This is part of a 105 crore modernisation project, upgrading core communication and security infrastructure across 228 stations with the Advanced Video Surveillance System (VSS).

The AI-powered surveillance system is currently operational at 31 stations. It includes 2,784 high-definition PTZ (Pan-Tilt-Zoom) cameras and 4K ultra-HD bullet cameras at critical locations. These cameras come with Facial Recognition System (FRS), Video Analytics (VA), and a centralized Video Management System (VMS), monitored through integrated command-and-control centres at divisional and zonal levels.

Customised camera layouts at stations; monitoring via command-and-control centers

Each station features a custom camera layout for instance, two cameras at entry and exit points, three PTZ cameras in parking lots, and multiple bullet and dome cameras covering ticket counters, waiting halls, and platforms. Smaller stations categorised under C and D follow a simplified setup.

Monitoring is enabled through two 55-inch LED screens at each station, with footage stored for 30 days and managed both locally and at divisional offices.

Security audits have been completed at key stations such as Mysuru, Pandavapura, and Mandya. Officials said full CCS implementation across the Hubballi and Bengaluru divisions is expected by September 2025.

Man loses Rs 5 lakh to work-from-home scam

12 interstate fraudsters arrested in online work-from-home scam

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

What began as a seemingly harmless text promising a side income turned into a high-stakes cyber chase across state borders. Adugodi Police have busted a well-oiled racket run by a gang of 12 cyber crooks who lured unsuspecting victims with bogus 'work-from-home' offers, only to siphon off ₹5 lakh. The accused, operating out of Uttar Pradesh and Mumbai, lured victims by promising commissions for simple online tasks through digital wallets and fake bank accounts.

CRIME FILES

The case was registered on January 22, 2025, after a resident of LR Nagar filed a complaint stating that he had received a message about a part-time work-from-home opportunity. Upon completing a few tasks, he received ₹800 as initial profit and was told to deposit ₹10,000 to withdraw his balance. Gradually, he was manipulated into transferring nearly ₹5 lakh, with a fake score balance sheet showing a false credit of ₹10.83 lakh. When asked to deposit an additional ₹3.24 lakh, he realised the fraud and approached the police.

During the investigation, Adugodi Police traced the transaction to a Federal Bank account in Uttar Pradesh. The account holder, summoned via official notice, revealed that a Mumbai-based labour contractor had used details of workers to open multiple bank accounts and handed over their ATM cards and SIMs to fraudsters for a commission.

Acting on this lead, the police arrested the Mumbai-based contractor and, subsequently, 10 more accused from Kamla Nagar, Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh on April 26. The arrests led to the seizure of 400 mobile phones, 140 ATM cards, 17 cheque books, 27 mobile phones, 22 bank passbooks, a ledger, and ₹15,000 cash.

All 12 accused were brought to Bengaluru on April 27 and were remanded to judicial custody the next day. The investigation is ongoing to trace more victims and accomplices.

Software engineer arrested for raising pro-Pakistan slogans

A 26-year-old software engineer was arrested by Whitefield police for allegedly shouting pro-Pakistan slogans from a PG balcony during a celebration pertaining to Operation Sindoor.

The accused has been identified as Shubhanshu Shukla, originally from Chhattisgarh, who resides in a paying guest accommodation in Prashanth Layout, Whitefield. The incident occurred around 12.30 am on May 9, when several youths in the PG were celebrating the successful conclusion of Operation Sindur.

According to witnesses, Shukla and his friend were standing on the balcony and watching the celebrations when suddenly, slogans praising Pakistan were heard. Alarmed by the slogans, the residents looked up to see two men on the balcony, one of whom was allegedly shouting the slogans. Concerned residents immediately alerted the police control room.

A youth from a nearby PG managed to capture the incident on video, which was later shared with the police. Based on the footage, the Whitefield police arrived at the location and detained the two men seen on the balcony. During interrogation, it was established that Shukla was the one who had raised the slogans. Following this confirmation, he was formally arrested and remanded to judicial custody. Police officials stated that further investigation is underway.

Fake post trouble

A petition has been filed at the Cyber Crime police station after a fake social media post claimed that Colonel Sofiya Qureshi's in-laws' home in Belagavi was "attacked", police said on Wednesday. The post, which was eventually deleted on 'X,' is believed to have originated from outside India. Authorities are working to identify the individual responsible.

Belagavi Superintendent of Police Bheemashankar Guled confirmed, "No such incident has taken place," clarifying that the post was false.

"We have filed a petition at the Cyber Crime police station in Belagavi district to seek details of this account holder from 'X'," he added. As a precaution, a local police team visited Col Qureshi's in-laws' house in Gokak taluk, and two cops have been stationed outside their home.

Colonel Qureshi was a key figure in the armed forces during media briefings on Operation Sindoor. —PTI

Anti-communal task force

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Wednesday said that the state government has decided to establish an anti-communal task force within the police department to tackle criminal and communal violence in the state.

Parameshwara stressed the need for such a unit to curb rising polarisation and maintain societal peace.

Minister Parameshwara said that he has directed the state's Director General of Police to submit a proposal for the initiative.

Speaking to mediapersons, Parameshwara said, "We have taken a decision to constitute an Anti-Communal Force, within the police department. When the naxal activity was there, we created an Anti-Naxal Force. —ANI

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Two painters held for killing friend in drunken brawl

Men try to pass off friend's death as accident, but after the post-mortem report was out, police suspected foul play

A night of celebration turned deadly in Amruthahalli when a drunken squabble among three friends ended in bloodshed. The Amruthahalli police have arrested two painters for allegedly murdering their friend following a drunken altercation during a party on May 8. The incident took place near an empty plot in Kaveri Layout.

The accused, Veeramani and Pavan— who hail from Tamil Nadu—were working as painters along with the deceased, Ahmad, a resident of Kankanagar. According to police, the trio had completed a painting job in Chikkaballapura and were returning after consuming alcohol near the plot when an argument broke out between Ahmad and Pavan.

In a fit of rage, Pavan and Veeramani reportedly assaulted Ahmad with wooden sticks, causing severe head injuries, and left him at the scene. The next morning, Veeramani found Ahmad still alive and took him to a nearby hospital, claiming he had been injured in a road accident. He was later shifted to NIMHANS but succumbed to his injuries on May 12.

Initially treated as an accident case, the hospital alerted traffic police for a post-mortem. However, the autopsy report pointed to foul play, prompting Amruthahalli police to launch a murder investigation. The duo was arrested shortly after.

Police sources said Ahmad was unconscious and barely breathing when found. He reportedly had no family in the city. Further investigation is underway. —BMB

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60% of slum-dwellers studied had low level of education

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

NGO representatives, and others with in-depth knowledge of their respective slums, were consulted to carry out the study.

Over 60% of the slum residents had a low level of education, highlighting the need for improved educational infrastructure and resources. Approximately 40% of the residents from these slums were found to be involved in informal occupations like street vending or domestic work.

Findings also suggest that 43% of the slums did not have individual toilet facilities and are dependent on community toilets. Moreover, hygiene is not adequate, highlighting the need for improvement in toilet and sanitation facilities.

Among health issues, non-communicable diseases like hypertension, diabetes, and stroke were identified as significant health concerns, and cataract, predominantly among the elderly population, was highlighted as a pressing health issue.

While healthcare facilities were available in most of the slums, access was limited due to the inability to afford medical expenses. Despite the availability of piped water or community taps, water quality and scarcity remained pressing challenges for households in Bengaluru's slums.

"To improve access to eye healthcare services, eye care awareness camps for both students and their parents, and in the community, should be conducted. Findings also highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions in slum healthcare. Strengthening community-based healthcare programmes, enhancing government support, and promoting awareness campaigns for eye health are some measures to ensure a better life for the marginalised urban population," the study noted.

Brutal murder of deaf-mute girl shocks Bidadi

Bidadi police are investigating the gruesome murder of a 14-year-old deaf and mute girl who was kidnapped and killed. The victim's body was discovered near the railway tracks in Bidadi on Tuesday, prompting a police investigation to apprehend the perpetrators.

According to reports, the girl was kidnapped last Sunday. Police officials explained that her spine was broken, neck was twisted, and she seemed to have been tortured and murdered. The discovery was made by members of the public who promptly alerted the police.

Upon receiving the information, Bidadi police arrived at the scene and transported the deceased's body to a hospital for post-mortem examination. While the investigation is in its early stages, police have stated that the medical report will be crucial in determining if the girl was also a victim of sexual assault.

Family members and numerous members of Dalit organisations took to the streets on Wednesday staging a protest in front of the Ramanagara District Administration office. Protesters are demanding swift justice for the victim. The Superintendent of Police stated " that initial examination of the body did not reveal any external injuries. The police are currently awaiting detailed medical reports.

A case has been filed at the Bidadi police station, and a dedicated team has been deployed to track down those responsible for the horrific crime. Authorities have assured the public of their commitment to ensuring justice is served. Acting under the supervision of District Superintendent of Police Srinivas Gowda, three investigation teams, led by Ramanagara DySP Srinivas and Bidadi Police Station Inspector have been constituted to fast-track the probe. The teams are gathering information on individuals and vehicles seen behaving suspiciously in the area over the past few days. **BMB**

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BABY BLUES

Postpartum depression: 5 signs new mothers shouldn't ignore

Welcoming a new baby into the world is generally envisioned as a happy, bonding experience — but for a great many mothers, it may be overwhelming, lonely, and emotionally painful as well. Postpartum depression (PPD) strikes approximately 10–15% of mothers, though the actual rate might be greater due to underreporting. While the "baby blues," a normal transient mood disturbance in response to postpartum change, usually lifts in two weeks, PPD can last months and needs expert intervention.

Mental health expert Dr. Ruhi Satija emphasizes the importance of recognizing the signs early – not just for mothers, but for their families as well. Below, she outlines five key symptoms of PPD, the reasons behind them, and how they can be effectively managed.

1 Ongoing Sadness or Emotional Numbness

Most mothers with PPD report feeling tearful, empty, or emotionally numb. Some become disconnected from themselves or from the pleasure of motherhood.

Why it occurs: Dramatic hormonal changes – such as estrogen and progesterone declines – following childbirth can influence brain chemistry and mood. Psychological distress, birth trauma, or inadequate support can magnify these emotions.

What alleviates it: Open communication with a therapist or a supportive support system is a key starting point. Journaling, mood monitoring, and self-compassion exercises can also assist mothers in understanding what they're experiencing — and why.

2 Loss of Interest or Pleasure (Anhedonia)

One of the features of depression is not being able to find pleasure in activities that used to be enjoyable – and that includes bonding with the baby, hobbies, or relationships.

Why it occurs: Depression influences neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin, which control reward and motivation. Therefore, even important or enjoyable activities can become meaningless or tiresome.

What works: Treatments such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can be used to bring back enjoyable experiences through the use of behavioral activation. The reinforcement of small, manageable actions – such as taking a brief walk or a loved meal – may bring back emotional connection.

3 Irritability or Anger

PPD doesn't always appear as sadness. Some mothers consistently feel frustrated, irritable, or angry – usually with themselves, their partner, or circumstances.

Why it happens: Chronic lack of sleep, hormonal imbalance, and emotional overwhelm can increase stress and decrease tolerance for frustration. Anger may be a cloak for underlying feelings of fear, guilt, or helplessness.

What helps: Mindfulness, stress-reducing techniques, and couples counseling can help the emotional response settle down. Validation of these emotions without judgment – annoyance doesn't make one an awful mother; it's an indication that something needs to change.

4 Trouble Forming a Bond with the Baby

Other moms feel disconnected from their baby, can't access love, or even worry that they're "failing" at mothering.

Why it occurs: Depression affects emotional functioning and can get in the way of attachment. Moms may be mourning an idealized concept of motherhood that they envisioned but did not feel.

What works: Skin-to-skin contact, babywearing, and therapist-guided bonding techniques can be helpful. Support groups with other mothers who have similar issues usually decrease shame and enhance connection.

5 Intrusive Thoughts or Suicidal Ideation

Some mothers have terrifying, intrusive thoughts – e.g., harming the baby (without intent), death thoughts, or a feeling that their baby or family would be better off without them.

Why it occurs: Severe depression skews thinking. Intrusive thoughts are a symptom, not a measure of desire or character. But they should be taken seriously and treated right away.

What helps: These thoughts need immediate attention from a mental health professional. With the proper treatment – therapy, medication, or even hospitalization – these symptoms often get much better.

Treatment for Postpartum Depression

Psychotherapy: CBT and IPT are first-line treatments. They restructure thinking and enhance emotional processing.

Medication: Antidepressants such as SSRIs (e.g., sertraline, fluoxetine) are safe during breastfeeding and are very effective for moderate to severe PPD.

Peer Support: Mother support groups decrease loneliness and foster community.

Lifestyle Changes: Getting adequate sleep, balanced diet, exerci se, and stress management are critical. Even small daily adjustments can aid recovery.

Emergency Intervention: For women with suicidal ideation or safety issues, emergent psychiatric treatment or hospitalization can be indicated. **—Femina**

Your Connect

personal

LOST & FOUND

I, Suman K.R , S/o Ramakrishna, 3415 2nd Cross Girinagar Bangalore 560085, lost my son Viraj Shetlur ICSE Original 10 Std Marks Card No 7922591. FIR no.1604364/2025, Bangalore. Mobile: 9008430967

DOCUMENT LOST

I, R Santhanalakshmi, r/at No 6 ,28th A Main Annaiah Reddy layout J P Nagar 6th Phase, Bangalore have lost my rectification deed near Inchara Hotel, J P Nagar, vide Doc. ID: 2996/2012-13. Police complaint given vide L R No. 1602908/2025 dt 12.05.2025. If found please call **8050652100**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SONTOSH RAMESH M, S/o Ramesh Uthappa, R/o Site No. 111, Old Building, Gunjur Palya, Varthur Hobli, Bengaluru – 560087, have changed my name as SANTOSH RAMESH M, vide affidavit dated 13.05.2025, sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, Srinivasa Rao R/o 40/1,3rd A main, Kaveripura, Magadi road Kamakshipalya,Bengaluru 560079 have changed my name to Srinivasa Rao Yeshvantha Rao. I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I, Raveena Anil Jain W/O, Ankush H R/o 249, Parasmani Blossom, Flat 102, 3rd Main Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru-560018 have changed my name to Raveena Jain for all purposes

I, Mohamed Sanahulla Mohamed Wahid Sab S/o Wahid sab R/o 52/2 Umar Bagh Pragathipura Post Bsk 2nd Stage B'lore have changed my name to Mohammed Sanahulla Khan for all purposes.

I, HANUMAPPA residing at #15 Ward No.3, Hulihyder, Koppal -583283. I have changed my name to HANAMANT. Vide affidavit dated 13/05/2025 sworn before notary. T V BHADRAVIJAYA Bengaluru

I, Meenakshi.M W/o Nagaraj R/o #51/2,Shanmukha Bhavana 7th Main,NRI Layout,Ramamurthy Nagar, Doorvaninagar, B'luru 560016,have changed my name to Meenakshi for all purposes.

I, ASWATHANARAYANA S/o SHAMANNA R/o No 2293 Devaki Nandan 16th Cross 24th Main HSR Layout Sector-1 Bengaluru 560102. I have changed my name to B S ASHWATH NARAYAN vide affidavit dated: 14/05/2025 Before Notary B M CHANDRASHEKAR Bangalore.

I Chandrakala Aravindkumar W/O, Arvindkumar Premchand R/o No Ob 1504 15th Floor Park West Apartment, Hosakere Road Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 560023 have changed my name to Chandrakala.

I, Sukanya R/o No.38, 5th cross, Ganapathinagar, Peenya 3rd stage , Bengaluru-560058 have changed my name to SUKANYA THIRUNAVUKKARASU (T Sukanya) Affidavit Dt.14/05/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Km Sana W/O, Arsalan Shaikh R/o No 91 14th Cross Umar Nagar Govindpura Nagawara A C Post Bangalore North Bangalore Karnataka - 560045 have changed my name to Sana.

I, Savitha Balan Padmakka Parabil R/o No.31, Shreyas, 3rd cross left, Gangamma layout, Jalahalli, Bengaluru 560013 have changed my name to Savitha Bal Parabil (Savitha Bal P) Affidavit Dt.14/05/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, NARENDRA KUMAR GADDAM S/o NAGESWARA RAO GADDAM R/o Flat no 101, H No 40, Arkavathi Layout Opp Samiksha Enclave HBR 5th Block Kalyan nagar, Bengaluru 560043. I have changed my name to GADDAM NARENDRA vide affidavit dated: 14/05/2025 Before Notary B M CHANDRASHEKAR Bangalore.

I, VASANTH KUMAR, S/o A C Subramani, R/o #105/No.6, 3rd Cross, Ayyappa Layout, Munne Kolala Extension, Bengaluru – 560037, have changed my name as M S VASANTH KUMAR, vide affidavit dated 13.05.2025, sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, RASHMI VIKRAM, W/o VIKRAM NAIR, R/o G4, B Block, SLS Sapphire, Bhoganahalli Road Panathur Bengaluru-560103. I have Changed my name to RASHMI VIKRAM NAIR vide affidavit dated 13/05/2025 before Notary B M Chandrashekar Bengaluru

I, Shivakumar Baburajendra Jogur R/o A203, Vaishnavi Oasis, Anjanapura 60 Ft road, Avalahalli, JP nagar, 9th phase, Bengaluru 560062 have changed my name to Shivakumar Jogur Affidavit Dt.14/05/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

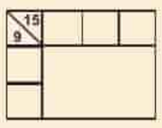
I, SHIKHA RAJESH KUMAR residing at #0001, Shraddha Mangal Apartment, SB Road, VV Puram, Bengaluru-560004. I have changed my name to SHIKHA MEHTA. Vide affidavit dated 13/05/2025 sworn before notary. T V BHADRAVIJAYA Bengaluru

GALLERIA

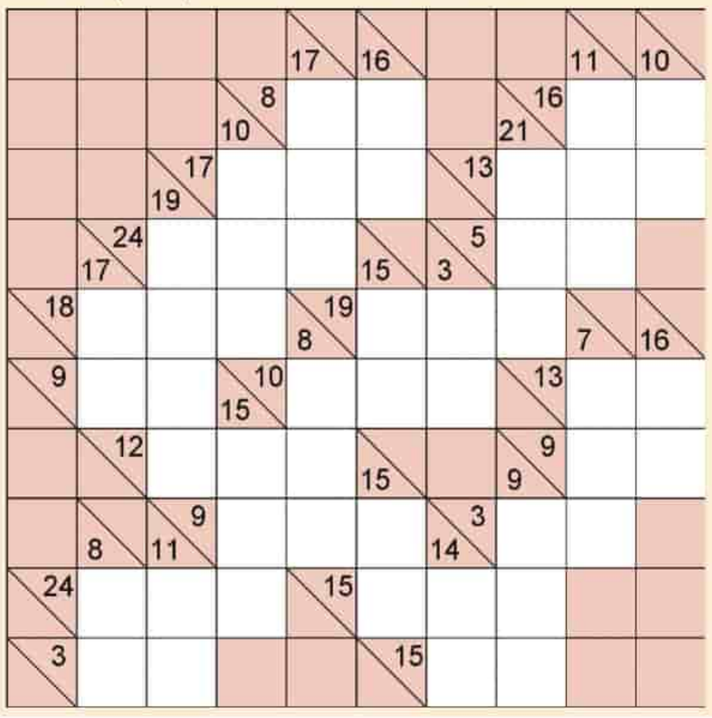
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
facebook.com/theBangaloremirror
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

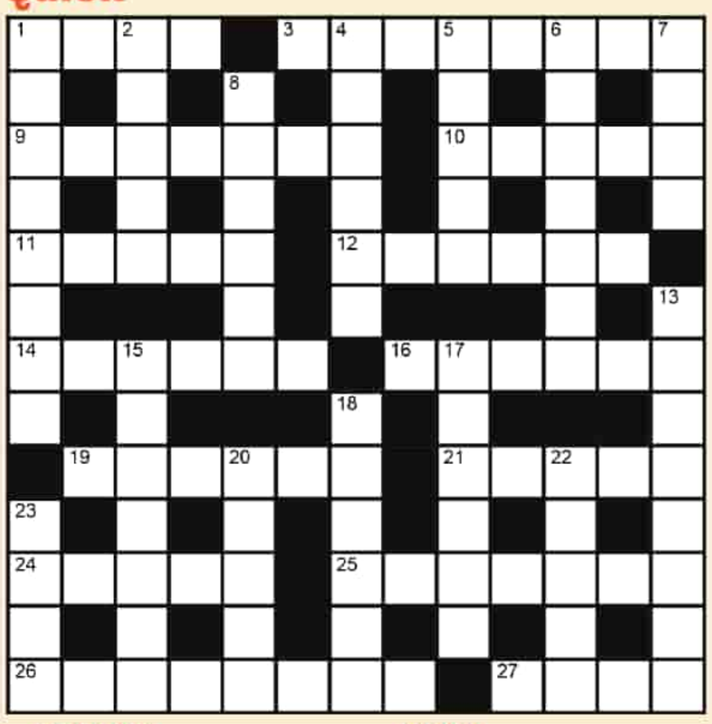
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Ornamental band (4)
3 Flirtatiousness (8)
9 Surrendered (7)
10 Entry hall (5)
11 Hawaiian verandah (5)
12 Groups of eight (6)
14 Passed through a sieve (6)
16 Kent for one, Middlesex for another? (6)
19 Great desert (6)
21 Tropical fruit (5)
24 ___ Hills: Scenic spot around 60 kms from Bangalore (5)
25 Refers, ascribes or attributes (7)
26 Projectiles, warheads or bullets (8)
27 Upper limbs (4)

DOWN

1 An optical aid (8)
2 Lustre (5)
4 ____ favourite: most likely to win? (4,2)
5 In poor shape (5)
6 Wear something and see how it fits (3,2,2)
7 Rambling story (4)
8 Counsel or opinion (6)
13 A summery, an outline as of the plot of a story? (8)
15 Parades ostentatiously (7)
17 Gilded bronze; a gold-coloured alloy (6)
18 French woman (6)
20 Proof of innocence (5)
22 The lowest point (5)
23 Kerala festival (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: L EQUALS S

MO ML KXTV OCW RVXMRMLH OCQO ML NKEX KI LZRRWLL OCQO ML FWXWOEQOMXP QXU BQTMU.

Linemaro

If I was your heart, would you let me beat?

Mindchow

There is creative reading as well as creative writing

Joke of the day

Never worry about the bullet with your name on it; instead, worry about shrapnel addressed to 'occupant.'

Loop

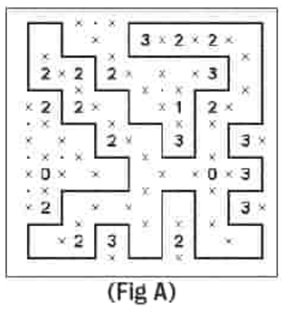
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

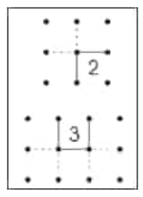
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

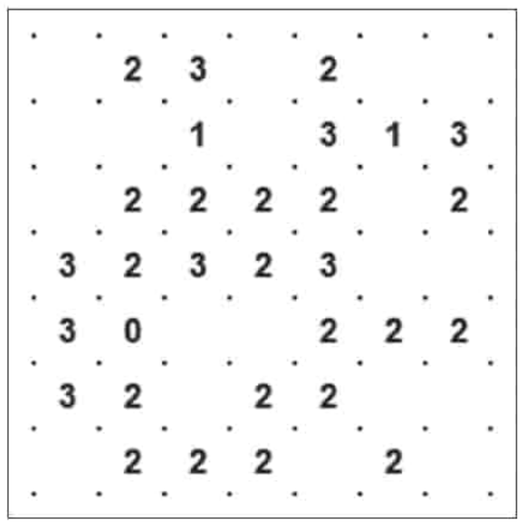
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



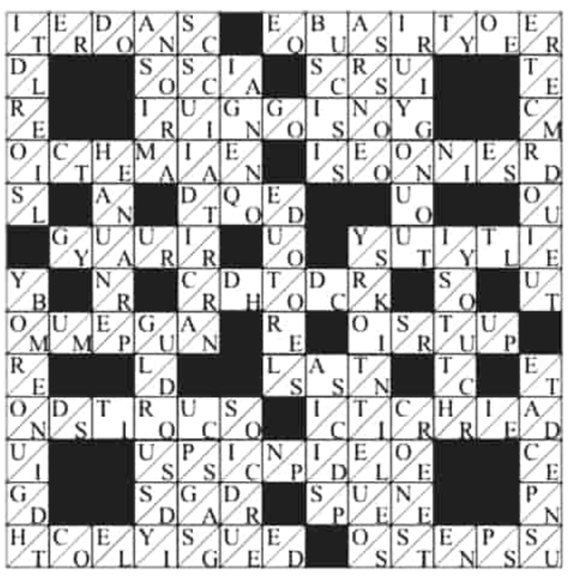
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



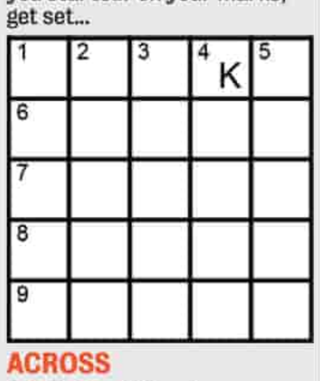
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

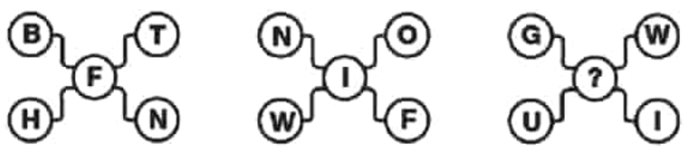
1 K Baba; 6 Curia;
7 Crt hi; 8 A sect;
9 Lady K

DOWN

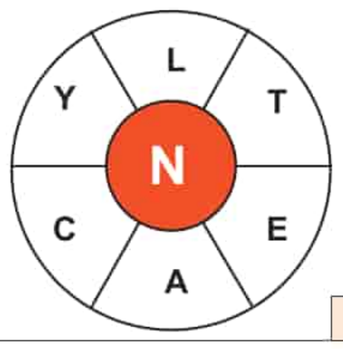
1 AC cab; 2 Laura;
3 Risk B; 4 TY kit;
5 He cad

Mensapuzzle

Which letter completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

13 Average; 15 Good; 17 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

6	8		7		4		2	1
				2				
	3		9		5		7	
		3	4		7	9		
	1						3	
		2	1		3	6		
	9		2		8		6	
				4				
3	7		6		9		4	8

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 1

1 4 5 7

Medium = 9

2 4 6 9

Hard = 47

2 2 5 7

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

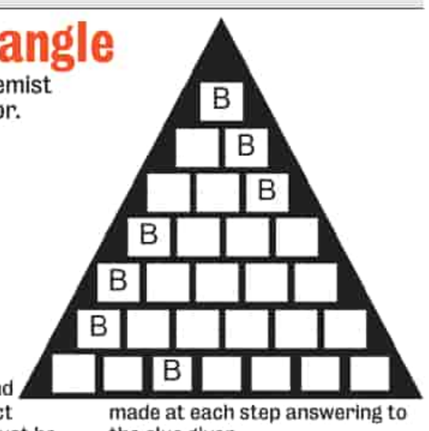
Differences: 1. Awning is different. 2. Back of chair is different. 3. Nose is different. 4. Collar is different. 5. Door handle is added. 6. Purse is missing.

Riddler

I am a path situated between high natural masses. Remove my first letter & you have a path situated between man-made masses. What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Boron for the chemist
2 Able-bodied , abbr.
3 Tiny piece
4 Commanded
5 Shaver's need
6 Parish officer
7 Fiasco



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye

IT'S CRAZY TO INVENT SYNTHETIC POLLUTION FER STREAMS AN' PONDS!
SCIENCE MUST BE IMPARTIAL!
WHY SHOULD ONLY BIG RIVERS AND LAKES HAVE A PART OF PROGRESS ?
YER DISGUSTIPATIN'!
?
8-17
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

I ATE LUNCH AT THAT NEW PLACE...
IT'S CALLED THE VAGRANT COW CAFE
WHAT DID YOU HAVE?
A BUM STEER
©2025 creators.com 2/6
www.creators.com

Hart of the city

YOUR TURN TO RUN THE MILE, HEART. GOOD LUCK!
STRETCH
WHOA! I FORGOT HOW MUCH ENERGY KIDS HAVE. I CAN DO THIS ALL DAY!
HEART'S TIME IS UNREAL. IS SHE SIGNED UP FOR TRACK?
NO, HER TIME WASN'T VERY GOOD LAST TIME. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED.
PUBERTY.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 AHRENS MCNEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

Harry, I want you to build an ark! The plans are on your desk!
HOW ARE THINGS LOOKING FOR THE BATTLE OF THE BANDS?
NOT GOOD.
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may be busy at work, and your wisdom could help you make the right decisions, boosting your business. A big order is likely, which may expand your operations. You might channel your creativity into renovating your home or office, enhancing your social status. Investment in creative assets is also possible.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, situations are under control. You're likely to recover from recent challenges. Working with patience will reflect positively in your performance. An outing may be on your mind, and students will likely stay focused on their goals. Singles may find love through friends or relatives.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You may feel emotionally unsettled today, and mood swings could impact your domestic harmony. Avoid arrogance at work, as it may create hidden enemies. Try to stay calm and drive cautiously to avoid any mishaps.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
A joyful day lies ahead. You may spread happiness and feel a sense of harmony in your personal life. Romantic moments with your spouse are likely. Family support may help you make important decisions, both personally and professionally. New business ventures or partnerships may be on the horizon.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
The positive influence of the moon may uplift your mood. Patience at work will pay off, and your performance could be rewarded with incentives. Family health concerns may resolve. Job seekers could receive good news. Lovebirds will enjoy quality time together.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, helping those in need may boost your social reputation. You might implement innovative ideas at work, leading to business growth and satisfaction. Lovebirds may plan an outing or an adventurous trip together.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may feel dissatisfied and detached from your responsibilities, leading to confusion. You might engage in hypothetical planning without practical steps—be grounded to meet deadlines. Postpone any migration plans for a few days. Take care of your parents, and avoid making impulsive decisions.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
You may feel enthusiastic and focused today, helping you restart delayed projects. Siblings might support you in launching a new venture, potentially profitable in the near future. A short family-related trip could be on the cards. Job seekers may receive positive news.

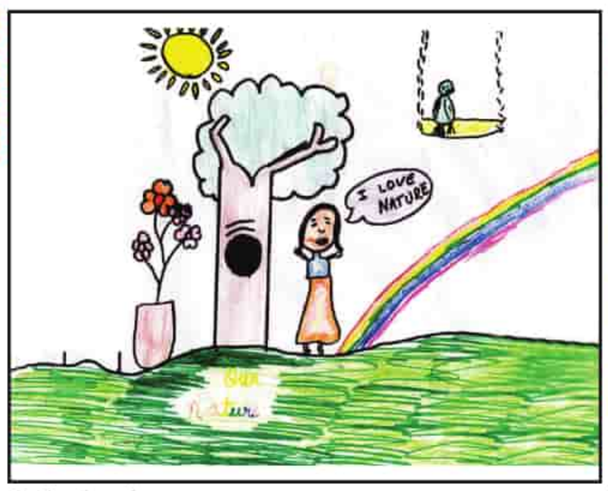
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you may gain better control over unnecessary expenses, improving your financial health. Your creativity may shine through in decorating your home or office, boosting your social image. Lovebirds may receive family support to strengthen their relationship. Students might hear good news in academics.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You are blessed by the moon today, bringing peace of mind. Despite some external work stress, you'll remain internally calm, helping you balance your tasks. You may enjoy both professional and personal life. New income sources may arise, boosting your savings.

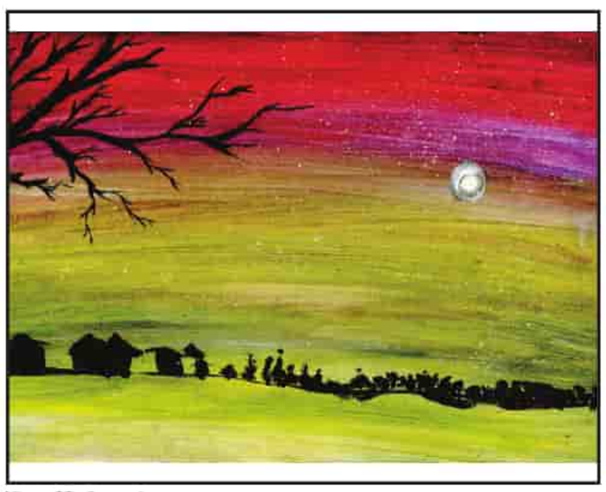
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You may feel low today, and old health issues might resurface, leading to fatigue and possible irritability. Arrogance could harm domestic harmony. Financial caution is advised—rash decisions may turn profits into losses. Think carefully before making any transactions.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
You may feel a surge of inner strength today. Past losses could turn into gains, increasing your business growth and liquidity. With support from your subordinates, you'll likely make difficult but successful decisions. Your performance may be praised, and incentives could increase your savings.

KIDZONE



Mishka, Bengaluru



Virat CR, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

BULL'S EYE
acne, ante, cane, cant, cent, clan, clean, enact, lance, lancet, lane, LATENCY, lean, leant, lent, neat, neatly

SOLVE IN 1M
2310+30÷15×120×1
2310+2-120
2312-120
2192

FAST FIVE

A	L	K	Y	D
C	A	S	T	E
C	R	I	T	H
A	U	R	I	C
A	B	A	K	A

QUOTE UNCODE
It is only the cynicism that is born of success that is penetrating and valid.

STRIKE OUT

I	R	O	N	S		Q	U	A	R	T	E	R		
D		O	C	A		S	R	I		E				
R		R	I	N	G	I	N	G		C				
I	C	E	M	A	N	S		O	O	N	E	R		
S		N		T	O	D				U				
		Y	U	R	I		O		S	T	Y	L	I	
B		R		C	H	O	C	K		O		T		
O	M	E	G	A		R		I	S	U	P			
R		L			S		A	T		T		E		
O	D	I	O	U	S		I	T	C	H	E	D		
U		S	P	I	N	D	L	E				E		
G		S	A	D		S	E	N				N		
	H	O	L	Y	S	E	E		S	T	E	P	S	

QUICK

M	I	S	S	I	L	E	S		A	R	M	S		
A		T		B		M			U		I			
N	A	N	O	I		A	L	L	U	D	E	S		
O		U		L		D		O		A		P		
S	A	H	A	R	A		M	A	N	G	O			
S		L			M			R			N			
S	I	F	T	E	D		C	O	U	N	T	Y		
A				N		C				O		S		
L	A	N	A	I		O	C	T	E	T	S			
G		E		V		S		I		I		N		
Y	I	E	L	D	E	D		F	O	Y	E	R		
P		H		A		D		N		R		A		
S	A	S	H		C	O	O	U	E	T	R	Y		

MENSA PUZZLE
N. Starting at the top left hand of every diagram, move around the outer circles in an anti-clockwise direction. Letters are written in alphabetic sequence, in steps given by the numerical value of the central letter.

RIDDLER
Valley & alley

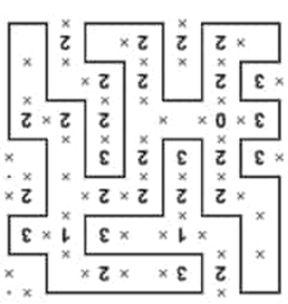
SUDOKU

6	8	9	7	3	4	5	2	1
1	5	7	8	2	6	3	9	4
2	3	4	9	1	5	8	7	6
5	6	3	4	8	7	9	1	2
9	1	8	5	6	2	4	3	7
7	4	2	1	9	3	6	8	5
4	9	5	2	7	8	1	6	3
8	2	6	3	4	1	7	5	9
3	7	1	6	5	9	2	4	8

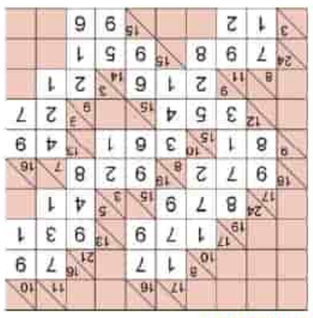
ALPHA TRIANGLE
B, AB, Dab, Babe, Blade, Beadle, Debacle.

GO FIGURE
Easy
4 - 7 + 5 - 1 = 1
Medium
6 + 9 - 2 - 4 = 9
Hard
2 + 7 x 5 + 2 = 47

LOOP



KAKURO



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Body is 'falling to bits' Actor Tom Hardy talked about his action-packed career and how it has taken a toll on his body. He shared, "I've had two knee surgeries, my disc's herniated in my back, I've got sciatica as well," adding he's dealing with plantar fasciitis too

Throwback gold

As Ishaan and Janhvi get ready for Cannes, a video of their early fun times goes viral

Ishaan Khatter and Janhvi Kapoor made their Bollywood debuts — first Ishaan in Beyond the Clouds, followed by their on-screen pairing in Dhadak. Fast forward to 2025, the duo is all set to reunite at the Cannes Film Festival for the premiere of Neeraj Ghaywan's Homebound, alongside co-star Vishal Jethwa. As excitement builds for their red carpet appearance, a nostalgic video of Janhvi and Ishaan ordering pizza has resurfaced, delighting fans with a glimpse of their early days.

Janhvi and Ishaan clearly shared a great bond while shooting for Dhadak, and their whirlwind promotional tour only brought them closer. Their easy chemistry sparked dating rumours at the time, but fans mostly adored their fun, friendly vibe. That same adorable energy is on full display in a throwback video that's gone viral just as they gear up for their Cannes debut. In the clip, a visibly excited Janhvi is seen trying to order pizza, hilariously confused by the endless chicken topping options — every foodie's dilemma! Ishaan, of course, can't resist teasing her, making the moment even more delightful. At the end of the video, Ishaan reveals that they're actually at the airport, grabbing a bite after their flight got delayed.

Glam expectations

Now, all eyes are on their big Cannes debut. Janhvi has consistently wowed with her glamorous fashion choices, and expectations are sky-high for her red carpet look. Meanwhile, Ishaan recently stole hearts as the dashing Maharaj in The Royals — his regal wardrobe and those chiselled abs had fans swooning. With both stars bringing their A-game, their Cannes appearance promises to be nothing short of spectacular. —ETimes

Tattoos are not forever

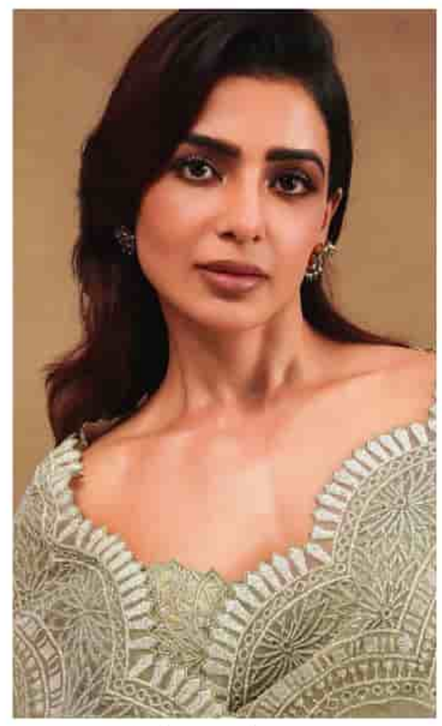
Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Naga Chaitanya's relationship has been one of the most talked-about love stories in the South Indian film industry. From their first meeting on the sets of 'Ye Maaya Chesave' in 2010 to their grand wedding celebrations in 2017.

However, their marriage, which was once seen as a fairy tale, came to an end in 2021 when the couple announced their separation.

Throwback to the time when, after their separation, the 'Kushi' actress shared regretting getting a tattoo and said that she would never do it again.

During an Instagram 'Ask Me Anything' session in 2024, she advised her younger self never to get a tattoo, hinting at regret over the permanent marks linked to her past relationship. Fans understood this as moving on from the marriage. She said, "You know the one thing I'd tell my younger self is never ever get a tattoo. Never. Never ever. Ever, get a tattoo."

For the unversed, during their marriage, Samantha got several tattoos inspired by her love for Naga Chaitanya. One was the initials "YMC" on the nape of her neck, a tribute to their first film together called, 'Ye Maaya Chesave'. Another was a matching tattoo with Naga on her forearm, featuring two arrows symbolizing "Create your own reality." The most personal was the word "Chay" inked on her rib, a nickname for Naga.



However, after their divorce, Samantha's feelings about these tattoos changed. Supporting this, a photo dump Samantha shared on Instagram in March 2025 showed her matching tattoo with Naga fading, leading to speculation that she is undergoing tattoo removal.

Meanwhile, Naga Chaitanya married actress Sobhita Dhulipala in December 2024. —ETimes

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